231 meat while two others had been sent to River Joe's son-in-law, Louis Maza, because of the report that the latter had killed two moose.

[558] Most people call their dogs in English. Some of the names given are: Tobacco, Paper, Yukon, Boiler, One Dollar, Sporty and Wolverine (also called Long Face in the Kaska
[422] language). Dogs are generally owned by men, but women and children usually prepare their food and feed them.

Little attention is paid to keeping dogs free from fleas or lice, although wood ashes applied to the animal's hair is regarded as effective in killing these pests. An efficient way of removing porcupine quills from a dog is to empty a porcupine's bladder on the affected parts. The urine stops the quills from penetrating further and the needles can then be painlessly withdrawn.

231 A few Nelson Indians own horses purchased from points outside of the Kaska area.[1]
492 A family generally owns two or three horses and the winter mortality of the animals is
apparently high. Horses are used as riding animals by both sexes. Boys from the age of
[439] twelve experience great enjoyment galloping and often ride bareback. Western type saddles are generally employed and preferred for riding. The main function of horses is to pack supplies from the trading post to the winter settlements, but they are also used in summer and fall to pack meat from a moose kill. One or two people in the Upper Liard River district considered purchasing horses with which winter outfits could be transported overland northeastward from the Alaska Highway. Other Indians maintained that horses are suitable east of Lower Post because there the snow is not very deep and horses can winter out. On the Upper Liard, however, the deeper snow would make winter feeding a serious problem. No grain is purchased for the winter feeding of horses. Some men showed considerable affection for these animals and also demonstrated a knowledge of equine qualities.

411 *Weapons.* Large and small caliber rifles are used in hunting. The single-shot bolt-action
224 rifle, firing a short or long .22 caliber cartridge, is mainly used for fowl and small game like rabbits. It is also used to kill fur-bearing animals, such as lynx, wolf and coyote, when these are found alive in traps. The relatively low cost of this gun permits extensive distribution. It is the first weapon which the adolescent boy or girl is able to use and own. The larger rifles of Canadian or American manufacture, firing a .30/30 or / .30/06 caliber shell, are used for killing large game like the moose and caribou. These guns are also regarded as necessary protection against the danger of bears. Their ownership is restricted to men, older boys, and women.

411 Considerable interest and discussion revolves around the types of shells available for
813 large caliber rifles. Long shells are preferred in the .22 size. Hard point large caliber car-

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[1] According to one informant the horse was introduced from Fort Nelson, presumably by members of the Nelson Tribe. If true, this would put the date of the introduction of the horse after [illegible], or after this animal reached the Fort Nelson Slave (Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* [illegible]). According to Old John, however, the Kaska certainly saw their first horse many years earlier, when the Klondike miners passed up the Liard and Frances Rivers' valleys. It is also possible that the horse was originally introduced from the south, via Forts Grahame and Ware, rather than from the east, and it is also well to remember that horse packing for big game hunters has long been an important occupation at Telegraph Creek. In [illegible] a number of whites pastured large horses around [illegible] River, [illegible] miles east of Lower Post, and also at [illegible] Lake. Indians purchased horses during this period from a trader, who brought the animals from Dawson Creek.

804 light enough to carry wherever an article of corresponding size is to be manufactured. An object to be fabricated in dimensions to match another article may also be compared to the latter by means of a length of string in which a knot is tied at the required length. Thus in the construction of a coffin, the length and width of the deceased were observed to be taken with a piece of string. The height of the reclining body, however, was ignored, hence the coffin was made too low.

412 401 Wedges for splitting wood are manufactured as required. They are cut from the lower portion of a black spruce sapling and sharpened with an ax to a long tapering blade. Chips of wood are used as wedges in whip sawing. The back of a long handled ax head is used as a maul.

415 322 The implements associated with most cabins are a broom, funnel, and a dustpan cut from a five gallon oil can. One family used an eagle wing as a whisk broom. When cooking is done on open fires, the tea stick is an indispensable piece of household equipment. It consists of a green willow pole, five or six feet long and an inch or more in its greatest diameter. The heavier section of the pole is sharpened and thrust into the ground at a forty-five degree angle to the fire. The upper section of the pole is notched for the handle of the kettle. The pole may be turned aside from the fire in removing the vessel. In a few days, when the ground becomes too soft to support the pole a rock may be placed on top of the buried portion of the wood and another stone thrust into the apex made by the pole as it leaves the ground. Tea poles are discarded when they become dry or charred. When meat is roasted in front of open fires smaller poles, about three feet high are cut, and thrust into the ground almost vertically, the meat being hung on a sharpened point.

417 322 A considerable amount of apparatus is manufactured. In front of each cabin is found a sawhorse for sawing wood. This consists of a bedlog about six inches in diameter and five or six feet long. Close to each end two spruce saplings, about four feet long and an inch and a half in diameter, are driven into the ground so that they cross each other at about a thirty degree angle. The wood to be sawed is placed in these angles. The bedlog is sometimes also used in splitting sawed lengths of wood. In the bush near the settlement are one or more saw pits. Ladders are made to reach caches. The rungs are either set in holes or nailed to side pieces. At either end of the ladder braces are nailed to the side pieces of lumber. For carpentering, a felled tree is leveled with an ax and raised on two stumps to serve as a workbench. Another piece of apparatus is used for bending green lumber in the manufacture of toboggans and sleds (Fig. [illegible], F, and Pl. 6, A). About six feet long, this consists of the lower trunk and part of the root of a spruce tree. Unnecessary portions of the root and trunk are trimmed away so that the wood exhibits a natural curve which is leveled and planed on its upper surface. Two poles, about two inches in diameter, are nailed to either side of the trunk. Where they project a few inches in front of the root, a crosspiece about eighteen inches long is lashed. The space between the root and crosspiece holds the lumber inserted for bending.

239 [432] Traps, which are an important category of capital goods, are generally purchased, but a few men still build deadfalls or set two or three snares for wolf and coyote. A trapper generally owns from thirty to fifty steel traps of various sizes some of which are given to

wives and children. A limited number of snares constructed of wire cable are also purchased 224
by most families.

Fur destined for commercial channels is dried on fur stretchers. The several kinds of 417
stretchers may be classified into two types, those used to stretch fine winter fur and those 322
used for beaver skins. Winter fur stretchers are of two sub-types. The first, which may be
designated as the keel variety, consists of a flat board known as the stretching board or 281
mould. The dimensions vary according to the pelt for which they are designed. Cut from the wood of a packing case or a piece of hewed poplar or spruce, a keel stretcher for mink is about fifteen inches long, three inches in its greatest width and about a quarter of an inch thick. The edges of the board are crudely bevelled. The foreward portion of the mould tapers sharply for an inch or so to hold the head of the skin being stretched. The keel for a mink stretcher consists of a piece of wood somewhat shorter than the length of the stretching board, half an inch thick, and two inches in its greatest width (Fig. 3, D, a). Along one side of its width the wood is perfectly level. In use this side of the keel is placed on top of the mould. Once inserted in the pelt with the pointed end under the head, the keel is lifted from the stretching board with a wedge consisting of any piece of wood about four inches long, an inch wide, and an inch thick.

The second sub-type of winter fur stretcher may be designated as the keelless variety (Fig. 3, D, b) and consists of two moulds separated by a wedge. These stretchers are used for furs like lynx, fox, coyote, wolverine, and wolf. Two pieces of hewed spruce about one and one quarter inches thick are used in the preparation of the mould. They are finished with an ax and planed smooth. For coyote and lynx skins each board is about six feet long and five to six inches across at the widest portion. The upper portion of each board tapers to a sharp point for about the foreward three inches. The rest of one side is gently rounded. The other side is level for about three quarters of the length. The wood is then sharply rounded to provide a handlelike end about a foot long. These boards are inserted into the skin so that the level sides are together. Between them is inserted a wedge, four feet long and tapering to a sharp point from a width of about four inches. The wedge forces the stretching boards apart thus spanning the skin. Including the time occupied in finding a suitable tree and hewing the lumber, about four hours are required to make a pair of these moulds.

A beaver stretcher is made by bending a green black spruce sapling, about seven feet long and an inch and a half in its widest diameter, into a half oval. A crosspiece, consisting of a spruce pole four feet long is lashed across the open end of the oval. The skin to be stretched is lashed to the stretcher with fine babiche, small holes being cut in the pelt's rim about two inches apart.

The frame used in cleaning moosehide is made by providing a ridge pole about twelve feet long and three or four inches in diameter. One end of this pole is lashed or nailed to a tree at a point about twelve feet from the ground. The other end is generally supported in a forked stick or may also be lashed to a nearby tree. Two poles three inches in diameter and about ten feet long are tied to this ridge pole with their lower end resting on the ground in a forty-five degree angle. The space between these poles is somewhat greater than the

Green timber is used for lumber. Beyond finding a thick trunk of reasonably straight 313 grain, little selection enters into picking trees to be used for ordinary manufactures. The selection of a birch to be used in constructing a toboggan is more carefully made. A fairly wide diameter is desirable so that three rather than four pieces of lumber will provide sufficient width for the vehicle. Straight grain is also sought. Finally, the tree must be healthy and without any sign of rust on the bark to within two feet from the ground, since it is the lower portion of the wood which is best suited for bending.

Hunting and fishing. The greatest emotional interest is invested in moose hunting, which 224 ● requires considerable persistence and initiative. Yet in all hunting the person usually sets 226 out with the same self-confidence and expectation of success. This attitude was characteristically expressed by Old Kean who said: "I never hunt yet. Bye and bye hunt all right. I kill him." Louis Maza once said: "We're gonna set fish net. We're gonna catch them." River Joe proclaimed himself to be a good hunter: "See track, follow him anyplace. Get him all right." Several times before setting out on a hunt, individuals mentioned dreams which contained a reference to fish or meat. These were interpreted as favorable omens for the forthcoming venture. Such dreams may be regarded as further aiding the hunter's and fisherman's self-confidence. Another important factor regarding the optimism that characterizes hunting is the fact that a person rarely sets out on a major hunting trip out of a sense of duty or urgency. Only chicken and rabbit hunting, in which the hunter knows from experience that he can expect some success, is undertaken as a routine activity out of necessity. The hunting of larger animals, however, always rests on the hunter's enthusiasm and eagerness. Pressure is of little avail if a man does not choose to hunt.

The moose, as mentioned, is the most important game animal hunted by the Kaska, although 224 in winter the caribou is equally important for food. Throughout the year adolescent boys and young men hunt rabbits. Porcupine are killed whenever the opportunity presents itself, despite the fact that in British Columbia a law prohibits this. Bears are not sought but are usually shot when encountered. If meat is short, a man may illegally shoot a beaver. In early autumn, men occasionally visit the mountains to hunt and trap groundhog and gopher. Hunting by Indians, except for porcupine and fur bearing animals, is not restricted by game laws.

A man planning to hunt moose generally prepares to be gone several days and expects to travel a radius of fifteen miles or more. Parts of country containing flat marshy stretches with, perhaps, an overlooking ridge are favorite spots for such hunting. Stretches of burnt timber are also visited for moose. A moose hunter's equipement always includes a large caliber rifle, a short handled ax, nails or line (in the event that he wants to return to camp on a raft), a sharp butcher knife wrapped in a rag, and matches. Food is also taken, the amount depending on the time the hunter expects to be gone but always including flour mixed with baking powder and tea mixed with sugar. These supplies partially fit into the hunter's pack. Blankets and ax are packed on a dog. Food is generally prepared for a man by his wife, who asks her husband how long he expects to be gone. If two or three men hunt together each takes his own food.

Moose are hunted individually. The hunter heads for a likely area and searches the ground for signs. When a track has been located, he estimates its freshness from the moisture of the torn soil, from the freshness of excrement, and from willow shoots, torn while the

224 animal was feeding. By the size of the hoof prints, he is able to say if the animal was a bull or a cow. Should the tracks be two days old or more, they are abandoned; otherwise the hunter sets out to follow. Tracking requires careful walking and moccasins are always worn. The tracker avoids stepping on dead wood and is cautious not to break or snap twigs as he passes through brushy places. He watches the wind so as to approach the animal with the current blowing from the latter's direction. When the trail veers from the wind, the hunter abandons the track and, heading with the wind, makes a half circle so as to come on the moose a mile or so further on. Should he come out below the moose, he judges the character of the country before him and the signs of the track. If he knows the area ahead to be thickly covered with willow and other brush, and if the evidence in torn soil, droppings, and bruised twigs is very fresh, the hunter suspects that the animal is only a short distance off, feeding or lying down. Again the hunter makes a half circle calculated to bring him close enough to the unsuspecting animal to venture a shot. Sometimes such a circuit brings the hunter up ahead of the moose. He must then retrace his steps, circling back to where he believes the moose to be. Often deep brush intervenes in the hunter's pursuit, causing him to lose his game either by missing the trail or by frightening the animal with noises. To these difficulties must be added the hazard of coughing. Returning from a moose hunt in the fall of 1945, Old Man said that the hunters coughed so much from colds that they frightened all moose away. When he was out tracking and a paroxysm of coughing threatened, Old Man threw himself flat on the ground to suppress the noise. In the fall, when moose are breeding, the haphazard tracks of the bull are hopeless to follow, and tracking is abandoned, since the bull "never rests." At this time a hunter will try to attract a bull or cow within range of his gun by imitating the bull's call or by rubbing an old moose horn or scapula on a tree.

> 9:19:45 (Old Man's place). Seven miles northwest of Old Man's Place is a point along a ridge known as Moose Hill. A number of moose have been killed from this elevation, the place overlooking a marshy willow flat where moose are fond of feeding. Harry headed here to call moose. He stopped and called at a point further below on the ridge but nothing responded.[9] At Moose Hill, Harry called again. In about five minutes he saw a cow moose appear on the flat below him. He shot once and missed. Quickly he injected a hard point cartridge into his rifle and, as the running animal appeared in an open space, shot again. The second shot went through the neck killing the moose.

224 221 Late winter, when the snow is crusted, is a favored time for hunting moose. Then the animal is said to be easy to kill because, sinking into the snow, he cannot readily escape the hunter who remains on the surface of the crust. Dogs are rarely used in moose hunting.

224 The moose is butchered immediately after killing, the work being done on a carpet of spruce or willow brush. The general procedure is to remove the head of the animal, skin the carcass, sever the limbs, and then, after gutting, cut the rest of the body into quarters and remove a few ribs and some tenderloin for transportation back to camp. Certain parts of

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[9] The following morning when the ethnographer and a party passed this place they saw tracks of a bull crossing Harry's trail. The bull had apparently come to the spot after Harry's departure to investigate the latter's call.

the gut, such as the colon fat and kidney fat, as well as the heart, liver, and head are cached 224 with the meat, the cache being protected by covering it with additional green willow or spruce brush. The hunter packs only enough meat for all families in camp to eat. A wife generally distributes this meat after her husband's return. The next morning, each family sends representatives to pack home a share of the kill. Nobody is necessarily invited on such an expedition, but everyone is free to join.[8] Dogs are taken as pack animals or, in winter, are harnessed to a toboggan. The hunter generally accompanies the group, leading the way. When the meat place is reached, tea is started and the viscera of the dead animal thrown to the dogs. Everybody then sets about butchering a quarter of the carcass and appropriating the meat. The whole procedure is fluid and unformalized, resting solely on each individual's initiative. No one exercises leadership or direction. Tea is ready by the time the meat has been divided. A lunch is generally prepared by roasting several ribs or tenderloin steaks in front of the fire. Leg bones are also roasted and then cracked for the marrow. When eating has been completed, the dogs or toboggan are packed and the party returns home.

Moose hunting, as well as big game hunting in general, is undertaken by a man, although there are no restrictions preventing a woman from engaging in the activity if she feels capable of doing so, particularly if she has no one to supply her with meat. In the fall several families will travel fifteen or twenty miles to a good "moose place," where a base camp is established from which individuals go out to hunt.

The amount of time and energy consumed in moose hunting may be judged by an inspection of the data in Table 4. It must be noted that this was the fourth year in which moose were reported to be extremely scarce in the Upper Liard River area, where these incidents were observed. 224 461

TABLE 4. AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT IN MOOSE HUNTING—1945

Personnel	*Time Spent*	*Results*
Louis Maza and Peter Tom	Seven hours	Three duck
Louis Maza and white man	Five hours	Nothing
Nitla	Three days	One porcupine
Harry Lang	Ten hours	One cow moose
Hans Donnelly and Nitla	Two days	Nothing

The time schedules are difficult to summarize in a table. For example, on October 1 Old Man left for a moose hunting trip. His son-in-law, Hans Donnelly, left to join him on October 3, together with Louis Maza and his family. On October 5 Old Man's remaining son-in-law, Harry Lang, joined the hunters, accompanied by Nitla. Harry and Nitla reached the base camp of the hunters just in time to help eat a bull which Hans had killed on the previous day. During the remaining three weeks that all except one man in this group hunted, not one other moose was killed, although several were missed. Harry and Nitla

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[8] Such sharing of meat is strongly expected. Old Man referred to a cousin of River Joe who refused to share meat. If someone approached this man while he was butchering and asked for a share of the kill, the latter would reply: "No, go get meat yourself." Such behavior met with strong disapproval.

224 stayed out hunting a total of ten unproductive days, Hans sixteen days, and Old Man
461 twenty days—a total of forty-six man days in which only one moose was killed.

Harry Lang's journal for 1940 was analyzed to discover the number of days spent hunting and the amount of game killed. The figures are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5. AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT IN HUNTING—1940

Date	*Number of Persons*	*Results*
April 23		"No luck"
April 24		One caribou
May 1		"4 or 5" caribou
May 5		"No luck"
May 8	2	Four caribou
May 9	2	One caribou
May 10–11	3	One beaver, one moose
May 16–18	1	One beaver, one moose
May 23		No luck
May 24		One caribou
June 3–4		One moose
June 27		No luck
July 2–8		Two moose
July 9		One bull moose
July 11		One bull moose
August 6–24	2–3	Three bull moose; four goats
August 25–31	2–3	Three bull moose

The brief period studied reveals both more time invested in hunting and greater success in this activity than were manifested during the term of field work. An explanation for the intense hunting may lie in the fact that during the winter of 1939–40, Harry's settlement ran short of food.[4] As a result, it seems likely that not enough time could be spent trapping to permit a leisurely summer in Lower Post. Hence the summer was utilized for hunting, the meat being important for seeing the family through till fall.

221 Caribou are generally sought after the beginning of December, when small flocks begin
224 to descend from the mountains to river valleys. They are far easier to hunt than moose, and it is often possible to shoot several on the frozen river without moving far from the settlement.

224 A rabbit hunter can operate in a radius of a mile or two from camp and seldom spends
252 more than two or three hours daily at his work. With a .22 caliber rifle and a game bag or packsack, the hunter starts in the late afternoon, seeking a place where black spruce grows thickly. Walking carefully, he peers under the brush and watches spaces between more distant trees. In 1945, a man generally managed to return with one or two of these animals after two hours in the bush. Rabbits are skinned and cleaned by women, to whom the hunter turns over the catch when he returns to camp. Rabbit hunting is usually done by

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[4] See below, p. 105.

adolescent boys and men, although it is also attempted by any girl old enough to handle a gun. 224 252

Porcupine are either shot or clubbed to death. Lacking a gun, Paulette Donnelly once axed down a jackpine on which she had seen a porcupine sitting. As the tree fell and the animal began to wobble off, Paulette went in pursuit and clubbed it with the back of her ax. After a porcupine is killed the hunter builds a fire and burns off the quills. The animal is then laid on a carpet of brush for butchering. A cut is first made on the ventral surface of the body, extending from the neck to the anus. The stomach and intestines immediately fall from the body cavity. The small intestine is carefully cut free, in order to preserve its blanket of fat. This organ resembles a string of link sausage, and is emptied by being pinched downward from the junction of each link. The heart, liver, and kidneys are left in the carcass, which is packed back to camp with the small gut.

The duck and goose are hunted in spring and fall, and the spruce hen and willow grouse, 223 throughout the year. Chicken hunting, like rabbit hunting, is generally motivated by the need for meat but girls frequently kill these birds while tending to the family's rabbit line. [221] Generally the birds are plucked immediately after being killed, when the feathers are easy [252] to remove. Success in hunting chicken depends largely on encountering a sizeable flock of feeding birds. A man may also return to a spot where he killed several spruce hens to shoot those which escaped but which remained in the neighborhood. With luck favoring him, a hunter will sometimes return from a fowling trip with six to nine birds. When a man's bag is as large as this, he may send some of his catch to other families in camp.

Most fishing is done in lakes and rivers before the formation of ice. The commonest fish 226 caught for food are the grayling, river trout, lake trout, and jackfish. Fishing trips are [221] motivated by a desire for fresh fish as a change from meat, or by the necessity of securing nourishing food for dogs. Fishing is done with a baited or fly hook and with nets. In the 227 fall, when fish travel into a slough to spawn, a net may be strung at the entrance to such a place. Nets are hung with floats about eight inches long and four inches in diameter prepared from spruce wood. Flat stones about two inches wide and three inches long are selected for sinkers. The stones are tied to the lower end of the net at ten inch intervals. Fish line is used for this purpose, the rock being secured in a running noose and the upper end of the line fastened to the net with a double overhand knot. Several feet of manilla rope are added to each end of the net and secured on shore to a piece of drift wood or an overhanging willow. Sometimes fish are driven out of a slough into a net by shooting, the concussion sending several stunned grayling and trout to the surface. When several hours will [252] be required to transport fish to camp, they are often gutted at the fishing site. If fish are to be carried only a short distance, they are strung through the mouth and gills on a thin willow shoot, the ends of which are then twisted together. Near camp a man or boy may fish alone. Generally men only use lines, but either sex may set a fish net. In the fall, a whole family sometimes travels several miles to a likely fishing spot and spends the day there eating fresh roasted fish. Often a family or two men will travel up to ten or fifteen miles to a fish lake, camping there for several days or a week and accumulating a dozen or two large jackfish and lake trout.

Only the rabbit is trapped exclusively for food, setting and visiting rabbit snares being 224 462

224 462 the daily task of women and girls, and is work greatly depended upon to keep a family supplied with meat from day to day. A woman will set from three to six snares at a time. The most common rabbit snare utilizes a trigger stick and spring pole and is constructed with stout cotton line. The spring pole must not be too heavy or the rabbit will be jerked off the ground so abruptly as to break the snare line. Brass wire is also used for snares but without a trigger stick; instead a simple noose is formed on a firmly anchored toggle (for example, a small felled jackpine). Such toggle snares are said to have been introduced into [177] the Upper Liard district by Mrs. Man, a Slave Indian from Fort Liard. Rabbit snares are located above rabbit runs, generally where such paths cross a trail. The noose is placed about three or four inches from the ground. After a heavy snowfall the snares must be raised above the surface of the snow, else they will be passed over by the animals. A tour of the snare line, which is always located close to camp, never takes longer than about an hour. If a snared rabbit is not dead when a snare is visited, the woman will choke the animal by wringing its neck.

224 *Fur trapping.* What animals are trapped for fur varies according to the resources of the region. Most areas can be depended on to yield lynx, squirrel, fox, weasel, mink, and wolverine. Marten, an animal whose fur commands the highest prices, is found on high ground, but not all trap lines extend to the mountains. Similarly, not all people are fortunate in having well stocked beaver creeks on their territory. In trapping, the Indian is governed by the game laws of the province or territory in which his line is located. In British Columbia, the season for winter trapping begins on November 15, while in the Yukon it opens November 1. In both places this season ends with February and gives place to the open season for beaver and muskrat. In British Columbia the beaver season extends from March 1 to April 15; in the Yukon it ends on June 15.

Even before the season opens, the trapper should be preparing for his winter work. Some of the duties that must be attended to are packing food to the camps and cabins located along the trap line; building new cabins, caches, or tent frames on the line; cutting new trail over areas of the line hitherto not systematically trapped, and repairing existent tents, cabins, stoves, and caches. White men engage in much more intensive preparation for trapping than the Indians. This is recognized by the latter. As Old Man said early in September, although the trapping season in the Yukon did not begin until November, "some white men start out this time. They pack their grub away. Get everything ready. The boys they wait, then they put their stuff out. I could do it now but I feel bad." Old Man's son-in-law, Harry Lang, moved some food to his base cabin on November 2. For the previous ten days he had been prevented from crossing the river because of running ice and slush. Old Man, who did not have the problem of crossing a river, had his wife move some food to a half-way cache on November 2. Both men started setting traps on November 4. Old Man's other son-in-law, Hans Donnelly, did not start setting traps until November 10, when he also first moved some food to his line camp.

Only unmarried girls and, sometimes, a man's wife confine their trapping to within a day's journey from the winter settlement. Men generally begin trapping from a base camp located from eight to fifteen miles from the home cabin. A man sets up to thirty miles of traps, generally in a circle or semicircle. To cover this circuit may take a week, longer if additional side lines are set radiating from the main trail. Once the traps are placed, they

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should be visited once every ten days or oftener, in order to remove fur and worthless prey like rabbits and squirrels. Frequent visiting of a trap line is important for several other reasons. In the first place, leaving animals in the traps too long increases the danger of losing them to wolves, wolverines, and coyotes. Also, if a movable toggle is used, the animal before it dies may drag the trap a considerable distance. If not discovered in time, subsequent heavy snowfall will conceal the tracks and carcass of the animal. Finally, the more often a man resets sprung traps, the more fur he can expect to accumulate. In practice, the ideal schedule is rarely followed. A man returning home to visit his family and to obtain additional food often delays returning to his trap line for a week or more. In December his routine is badly broken by a longer absence from the trap line, this time for a visit to Lower Post to obtain new supplies. Illness of the trapper or a member of the family may further delay his return. It can be estimated that trap lines are revisited on the average of about once every two to three weeks.

The pattern of covering trap lines is revealed in the chronological record of events that occurred in Old Man's settlement. These notes are abstracted from the ethnographer's journal.

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11:2:45. Harry left this morning to take traps and food to his cabin. Earlier in the morning Mrs. Man and Elsie Lang left to take food to a cache halfway to Old Man's trap line. Mrs. Man returned early, but Harry returned after night fall.

11:4:45. Despite snow, Old Man and his wife left at about ten o'clock to go on their trap line. At about one o'clock Harry Lang and his family left for their base camp. Raymond and Donald Suza returned from Lower Post with additional food and traps for Old Man.

11:5:45. Hans explained that he cannot go to his trap line until he has finished his snowshoes. It snowed most of the day.

11:6:45. Harry returned to fetch his sleigh and snowshoes. He will leave again tomorrow.

11:7:45. Harry left for his line cabin at about two o'clock. He planned to stay until November 20. He will then return for more food or, if he has skins, will go to Lower Post.

11:8:45. Hans said he would start for his trap line tomorrow.

11:9:45. Hans delayed his departure for one more day and spent the afternoon improving several miles of winter trail running to his trap line from the settlement. Old Man and his wife returned in the late afternoon for additional traps.

11:10:45. Hans got off for his trap line today with his brother, Raymond.

11:11:45. Old Lady Metia died.

11:15:45. Hans and Raymond returned to secure dog packs, the former explaining that the snow was not yet deep enough for toboggan travel. Harry and his family also returned, having been summoned to help bury the old lady.

11:16:45. Beer drunk.

11:18:45. Old lady buried.

11:20:45. Old Man set half a dozen traps across the river.

11:21:45 to 11:24:45. The boys hunted, and Hans shot one moose.

11:26:45. Harry and his family returned to their trap line. Old Man explained that his wife's illness is delaying their return. Hans planned to return to his line today, but postponed departure in order to permit Raymond to finish a pair of snowshoes.

11:27:45. Hans and Raymond left for the trap line.

12:1:45. Old Man visited his short line across the river but returned without fur.

224 461 12:4:45. Old Man and his wife (who was still feeling ill) left for the trap line. Harry returned with one lynx and two fox.

12:7:45. Hans returned with two lynx and one fox.

12:10:45. Started for Lower Post.

224 Most trapping is done with the aid of metal traps obtained from local trading stores in various sizes. A well equipped trapper sets fifty or more traps. If he is diligent and well supplied he sets traps at about a quarter mile intervals.

The trap is set in a locale showing animal tracks or at a spot which is reputed to be favorable or lucky for trapping a certain species of fur bearing animal. A fox or lynx trap is generally set with the aid of two trees. One of these, a tree two or three inches in diameter, is lightly grazed with an ax about twelve inches from the ground. About half a teaspoonful of scent or bait is smeared on the exposed wood, and the trap placed at the base. The second tree, a low sapling about an inch thick, is cleaned of branches and used as a fixed toggle—the chain of the trap being slipped over the tree. If two trees are not found in conjunction at a likely place, a free toggle, a pole two or three inches in diameter and six feet long, is used and lodged under a large piece of deadwood. Heavier toggles are employed for animals, like the wolverine, which would chew through a thin sapling. The trap itself is set on a thin layer of brush in order to prevent it from freezing into the snow. Four or five bare twigs, about ten inches high, are set at both sides of the trap as a pen and are designed to force the animal to come straight to the bait and thus step into the open trap. The stick used to smear the scent on the blaze is placed to the rear of the trap as an additional lure. To set a trap in this fashion takes about five minutes. The favorite bait for lynx, fox, mink, and other animals is a mixture of ground beaver castors mixed with lard or butter. A dead squirrel caught in a trap may also be left for bait. Bread or meat is regarded as suitable bait for weasel, while oil of cassia is used for marten, mink, fisher, and coyote. Canned sardines may occasionally be substituted for beaver castors. Sometimes no bait or scent is used and the trap is set blind in the middle of a trail, being covered with a little dry grass. Indians are not generally interested in the experimental approach which white trappers lend to their work, but a number of Nelson Indians reported utilizing bright paper and coffee tins to attract animals' attention. In addition to metal traps, most men also set four or five wire snares for wolf and coyote.

By the time a trapper revisits his trap line, the animals caught have generally frozen to death. If they are still alive they are either shot in the head with a .22 or, if not savage, clubbed to death with a stick.

224 422 The general practice is for every adolescent and adult in a family to set traps in the territory agreed upon as his part of the trap line. Sometimes, however, two men, related or unrelated, may set traps together in a single area. Generally one of these "partners" is a youth who is often referred to as assisting his companion. Although the two men operate together, each really traps independently. That is, the fur caught in the traps which he sets (whether these traps are owned by, or loaned to, him) is his own. The same principle obtains if adolescent girls or married women set traps given to them by a husband or father; the fur caught becomes their own.

224 With the arrival of the beaver season a family may leave the winter settlement and move to an area near a beaver resort. Beaver, being less difficult to obtain than fine fur and earning

224 high prices, is regarded as the most important fur to trap. The beaver season, therefore is eagerly awaited and an individual whose territory contains a well stocked beaver creek is regarded as being a favorable position. Resources in beaver are often referred to as the "Injun bank" and an average trapper can expect to almost double his winter earnings during this season. Beaver trapping differs from winter trapping in that it requires considerable immersion in water, so that it is often accompanied or followed by colds and other illness.

244 *Gardening.* In the spring the men in most families plant a small garden in the winter settlement. The standard crops are potatoes, turnips, carrots, and radishes. The gardens remain unweeded while the people spend the summer in Lower Post and usually, being unfenced, are constantly raided by rabbits. Gardens are not of great economic importance. Their yield is generally small and never included when a man estimates the amount of food which his family will require for the winter.

185 224 *Foresight.* There is little manifestation of any realistic attitudes of conservation among the Indians, although the need for such a policy is recognized. To illustrate, Old Man complained that low bush cranberries and raspberries had almost disappeared from the neighborhood of his home. He blamed this on the indiscriminate picking. He also alluded to the large scale moose and caribou hunting that had formerly been possible in the Upper Liard River area. In one year the family's hunters brought down eighty-two caribou and moose. In 1939 Old Man's son-in-law, Harry Lang, told his father-in-law that if they continued to hunt "every day" they would "clean out" all the game. Old Man didn't believe Harry then. "Game come anyway," he told the young man. In 1945, when moose were scarce, he was more inclined to believe the younger man's advice. Old Man also reported a beaver colony near the winter settlement where the beaver "must be old as me." They are never trapped, he reported, being left for "seed." Old Kean, another Upper Liard Indian, was reported to leave marten areas alone for two or three years in order to give the animals a chance to breed.

The Indian's appreciation of the necessity for conservation is well illustrated by his attitudes toward the ruling of the Yukon Government in 1945 declaring beaver trapping to be closed for three years. Hans Donnelly was aware of the fact that the supply of Yukon beaver had become seriously depleted, especially as a result of the indiscriminate killing of these animals prior to 1938, when a law went into effect prohibiting their shooting. Despite his understanding that policy of conservation aimed at rebuilding these depleted resources, he resented the closure and agreed with the point of view expressed by Nitla who said: "Somebody say beaver closed three years . . . what he gonna live on, the people? Better open that beaver. Government look after his boys. . . . Springtime, just sit down one place, out of money, poor luck, too bad. Oh, beaver open, pretty good, best way. Marten closed, pretty good, best way. Government smart, he do it all right. . . . Soon men starving he gonna eat that beaver meat. No smart; that's why he say that closed. Marten, you eat nothing. Just skin. That meat you throw away. Better marten make him closed."

TECHNOLOGY

32 The principal techniques followed by the Kaska in processing the raw materials obtained from the environment are: woodworking, the making of cordage, skin working, and fire-making.

bunk, besides a cook stove and an airtight heater. In Lower Post, houses often contain 352
single cots acquired from construction camps along the Alaska Highway. At least one family [207]
in each settlement usually owns a radio which is not, however, always in working order.
Shelves consist of wooden packing boxes nailed with their backs to the log walls. Food,
clothing, and other equipment is piled on the floor, stored under bunks, or suspended from
poles stretching across the width of a cabin.

Away from Lower Post practically all furniture is locally manufactured out of hand hewed poplar or whipsawed spruce. Besides benches, spruce tree sections, ten or twelve inches in diameter and eighteen inches high, also serve as seats.

A cabin or camp often presents an untidy picture of a great many articles stored in any available space. Old Kean's tent frame presented an extreme picture of disorder. Here the tables were littered with tins of jam, butter, syrup, half used packages of macaroni, and other food left over from several meals. Food was stored under the tables and even in the center of the floor. The bunks were piled with guns, clothing, tarps, and miscellaneous objects.

Griffin has described the interior and furnishings of one of the older cabins in Lower
Post (perhaps Mrs. Dickson's house) as he saw it during April 1943. " . . . we go into one
of the cabins, stooping to pass the low doorway and straining our eyes in the dim light. Beyond
a bed in one corner and a stove in another there is little in the place. The woman sitting
on the bed regards us apathetically, but the eyes of the boy beside her are bright and
full of curiosity. Two men are bent over some pelts laid out on the floor, marten and lynx.
Hudson asks them what the trapping was like this winter and one of them replies laconically, [224] ●
"No good. Too cold."[7]

In summer, bedding consists of a single sleeping bag or a pair of heavy woolen blankets. 513
In winter a second sleeping bag may be used or additional blankets. Bunks are sometimes 352
covered with dry grass. Some families have acquired single size camp mattresses from construction
camps. In daytime, when people sleep on the ground in cabins or tents, the bedding
is rolled into a huge roll and stored in the rear of the dwelling where it becomes a backrest
for the occupants.

In winter, spruce brush is laid in front of the entrance to a cabin or tent frame, or a burlap 355
bag is thrown immediately inside the door of a house. Here a person scrapes the snow
from his moccasins before the warmth of the building causes the melting snow to wet his
footwear.

Cabins with floors are swept every day or so with a broom. New brush is laid in tents 356
and floorless cabins about once every two weeks, the old branches being discarded. Every
fall cabins are rechinked where necessary and additional sod may be piled on the shallow
spots of a dirt roof. Heavy snow is removed from the roof of a sod cabin and from the tops of
tents. Cleaning and chinking are done by women, while a man keeps the roof in repair. If [462]
tents burn or otherwise become damaged, a woman takes down the shelter and sews a new
piece of canvas into the damaged area.

Mice are household pests. Dwellings often contain mousetraps, most of which are of 356
native manufacture. To make a mousetrap, a man takes a piece of wood, fifteen inches long, 224

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[7] Griffin, Alaska and the Canadian Northwest (1944), 127.

and carefully whittles it to a smooth round surface. About seven inches from either end he 356 tacks a piece of cardboard or tin, about three inches long and two inches wide. This makes 224 a narrow platform. On one edge of this platform a bit of bait, such as rice or bacon rind, is placed. The stick is then fitted into holes cut in the sides of a four gallon oil can, from which the top has been cut away, and about half filled with water. A mouse running out along the stick to reach the bait must step on the platform. The weight of the animal causes the platform to upset plunging the mouse into the water. When the trap failed to reduce the mice in his house, Old Man one night tried to shoot these pests with a .22 rifle. He placed a little rice for bait on top of a ridge pole. Hearing a mouse approach the food his wife focused a flashlight in the direction of the animal. The mouse froze in the glare of light and old Man tried to shoot the thief. His eyesight was too poor, however, for him to kill any mice in this way.

Nonresidential buildings. A few nonresidential structures are built or used by the Indians. 343 Such buildings include latrines, caches, and bunkhouses.

Latrines are not common. They are not built while the people live in Lower Post but 343 are sometimes found around the home cabins. Little care is taken in their construction. 514 They may be constructed with a piece of canvas over a frame of poles, or they may be built of log walls covered with canvas like a tent frame. Old Man dug a latrine and covered it with an old mosquito tent. He was about the only member of his family to use the structure.

A cache is found near every home cabin and is designed to afford protection to winter 343 food stores from mice and bears. The simplest type is a platform made of two inch wide 251 poles; it is about five feet square and rests on four posts, three or four inches in diameter and eight feet high. The goods to be cached are placed on the platform and covered with a tarp which is then tied down. More substantial caches are rectangular walled structures, about six feet wide, seven feet long, and five feet high, erected on a platform of heavy spruce poles. The platform itself rests on posts raised about ten feet from the ground. The walls of the cache are built of spruce poles, four or five inches in diameter, and fitted with a pole and dirt covered gable roof. A ladder is used to mount to the narrow platform left in front of the cache, while entrance is through a narrow opening about four feet high. The poles supporting a cache have strips of tin, ten or twelve inches wide, obtained from four gallon oil cans, nailed around them about halfway from the ground. The smooth surface of the metal prevents mice from climbing the poles.

Bunkhouses are not specially constructed but consist of cabins or tent frames which 343 were abandoned after a new dwelling was constructed. Such shelters are sometimes used in winter by visitors to a settlement and contain little more than a stove. Guests provide their [574] own bedding and kitchen utensils. Any unoccupied dwelling may also be used as a workshop for winter carpentering and skin work.

When Mrs. Man, a Slave Indian, first came to Old Man's settlement, she built a "tipi," such as she had been familiar with in her own country across the mountains. She utilized this structure as a workhouse and cookhouse, the open fire permitting the broiling of meat. The construction was described as a circle of closely placed poles covered with moss and dirt, and with an opening at the top for a smokehole.

Settlements. The semi-permanent winter settlement consists of a family's caches, home 361 its own grub and this principle is rigidly adhered to in summer, when the people live in 262 Lower Post within easy contact of the stores. In winter, however, shortages of grub frequently [476] arise and a family often has to be assisted until it has accumulated sufficient fur to undertake a journey to the trading post to restock depleted supplies.

Periods of hunger often occur among the Kaska. There are several reasons why this happens. A man sometimes errs in estimating his winter outfit. Often a minimal supply of grub must be shared with more unfortunate relatives. A man may also lack the money or credit to buy sufficient food. When any one or a combination of these conditions occur, and the family cannot kill sufficient meat to take the place of grub, acute and serious food shortage results. Hunger is never pleasant to the Indian, yet the average man and women is able to accept temporary periods of food shortage without manifest alarm and overtly tends to minimize such experiences. Despite the anxiety concerning food, most people do not carefully ration their winter outfits. As a result, shortages are discovered only when the supply of a particular commodity is already almost exhausted.

A period of hunger was reported to have occurred in Old Man's settlement during the 261 winter of 1939-40. All the grub had been eaten and there was no meat. Included in the 262 several families living in this settlement at the time were Old Wiley, his wife, and children; they had not purchased a winter outfit. "They always had no grub. Old Wiley never trap," Old Man explained. "Girls, gee they tough; they strong. They didn't feel no hungry. They sing around, cut wood." After four days with scarcely any food, Old Man's son-in-law, Harry Lang, killed a dozen chickens, and then Old Man brought down nine more fowl. Everybody ate chicken. The following day Harry left again to hunt moose. He killed one [224] moose but lost another. "I got one marten," Old Man related. "I got seven skin that time." He took the marten and traveled to a white man's home twenty miles upriver. This white trapper gave Old Man "nearly two hundred pound grub for one marten. Here it is, we come back with load of grub. Here it is, they all left. They went to Excited Lake. We got to Excited Lake. Everybody hungry." The people had already consumed the whole of Harry's moose. "We come in with grub. I think it last about three days." In March, Harry took Old Man's skins to Lower Post from where he returned with a sledful of grub.

Associated with the familiarity of hunger is the fact that people are always ready to 262 accept food. A gift of food is recognized as one of the most important presents. In children, 431 the desire for food shows itself starkly, being as yet unmodified by socially patterned inhibitions 152 on emotional expression. Young boys entering the ethnographer's home and seeing his children eating stared avidly and sometimes snatched at leftovers which were abandoned on the plates.

For most of the Indians the ideal diet consists of a balance between meat and grub. 262 These need not necessarily appear together at every meal but some meat in the course of a day is regarded as indispensable. Either a diet of straight meat without grub or straight grub without meat is regarded as unfortunate. Not only is a straight grub diet less appetizing, but people are aware that reliance on such food causes staples to diminish rapidly and therefore increases the danger of running short. Living on straight grub also involves a greater expense; meat is free, but grub must be purchased at relatively high prices. Only one or two old women, like Mrs. Man, are content with a straight meat diet accompanied by little more

stopping in Lower Post following employment with a government survey party. While the 695
legally worded charge was being read the accused unthinkingly turned his back on the magis- 689
trate. For this he was sharply rebuked. Pleading guilty, the youth was questioned concerning 656
the source of the liquor. He affirmed that soldiers had given him a bottle of rum. The magistrate sarcastically remarked that such generosity to Indians was difficult to understand, since most soldiers were themselves short of liquor. He then imposed a fine of fifteen dollars and costs, and adjourned court while the defendant, in company with the provincial policeman, went to friends trying to borrow the money. The boy came to the ethnographer's cabin and there found Daisy Joe, an Indian woman, whose common law husband was a white man. The policeman had recently caught this woman in the company of her husband carrying a gunny sack of beer. Now, suffering from severe toothache, she was uneasily waiting to see if her offense would also come to trial. When the boy asked Daisy (a nonrelative) for money, the policeman became suspicious and remarked: "Maybe that's where you bought the liquor!" This accusation was firmly denied by both parties as well as by Daisy's white husband.

Trials are conducted so as to be punitive as well as judicial. Several times we heard the 695
magistrate making an attempt to frighten the Indians from drinking. There is no question but that the people are afraid of court proceedings, although they are never sufficiently intimidated to reveal the true sources from which liquor is secured. Thereby they protect their access to those sources. Most of the time court proceedings are conducted on a level of formality and a plain of experience quite foreign to the Indians. The efforts of the magistrate to command respect and proper courtroom demeanor are both pitiful and amusing.

INGROUP RELATIONS

In this section, cooperative action and conflict within the Kaska nation as a whole is 178
considered. In the section immediately following discussion will take up relations between Kaska and non-Kaska individuals.

It is in keeping with the atomistic character of Kaska society that cooperation within a 182
tribe or within the nation as a whole should be unknown. No mechanisms for bringing 185
about the unified functioning of these groups are available and group sentiment is transient 224 ●
and ephemeral. Under such conditions it is not surprising that the development of social 156
policies has scarcely gained even a foothold in the group. About thirty-five years ago, under the direction of a white man, James Teit, the Kaska were involved in an attempt to further group interests by supporting a social ideology.[21] The movement was directed toward the preservation of the Indians' right to trap anywhere in the country without being confined to registered trap lines, which were at that time being introduced in British Columbia. As the first task of implementing this social policy, the Indians contributed money which was to be used to institute legal proceedings. Teit, however, is alleged to have absconded with the funds collected. At any rate, the policy met with no success. Even in this group movement, as reported by Old Man, we can detect the spirit of individualistic opportunism at work. "We're trapping Yukon side. White man tell us, 'Yukon trappers put up five dollars. B. C. trappers put up one hundred dollars.' They do that. Old Chief put up five hundred

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[21] We have adopted this term from Kardiner who uses it to refer to "a system of ideas which seeks implementation by action to gain or preserve certain interests," Kardiner, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (1945), 371.

182 dollars. That's his kids. He's got maybe five kid. Each put up one hundred dollars. *He figger*
185 *he gonna take whole Hyland River.* Old Kean put up one hundred fifty dollars. My brother
224 put up ten dollars. They say from Lower Post three thousand dollars going.'" The imputed
156 motive of Old Chief (which we have italicized) is significant, since it points out the lack of
ingroup solidarity and the self-centeredness of the individual. Old Chief received his designation from white men and should not be regarded as an executive whose legitimacy was derived from the native society.

185 Today only unorganized and diffused traces of social ideologies are encountered. All of
182 these emphasize better governmental care of the Indian and consist mainly of pleas and complaints which never achieve a stage where they are implemented by action. Interest was shown toward a Canadian Commonwealth Federation (C. C. F.) organizer who came to Lower Post in 1945. Old Man, who heard of the man indirectly from John Kean, spoke approvingly of the "new government" and thought it would "do something" for the Indian.

571 Interpersonal antagonism characterizes most of the relations of men in the area and is
521 even the most prominent feature of interpersonal relations within a tribal district. Despite
157 the ideal attitude commanding a person to mind his own business, the common expression
of this latent hostility is through malicious gossip and backbiting. Such expression, however, is confined to good friends and older men who are not apt to carry the calumnies back to the subjects. Young men and most women show a strong and consistent reluctance to gossip or criticize, and it is only in an unguarded moment or during intoxication that their feelings are permitted escape. The careful control on the expression of hostility is related to the Kaska Indian's great fear of giving offense to people and thereby damaging his own reputation. Old Man illustrated this tactfulness abundantly. He felt that Old Lady Metla had to be given a good funeral for fear of otherwise offending her daughter, Lady Suza. Following the death of her mother the latter was received in Old Man's house as a temporary accommodation, but the old man soon regretted his action as he began to perceive that Lady Suza and her youngest son, Donald, were depleting his stock of grub. He was extremely reluctant however, to take any action that would give offense. Instead he complained to the ethnographer of his guests' eating habits and criticized young Donald's laziness. A large part of his resentment was expressed in the socially permitted form of tormenting the latter youth for his indifferent work habits.

578 The hypocrisy between even good friends is striking. Old Kean and Old Man had spent
571 a sociable evening drinking brew together and complimenting each other. Two days later
Old Kean criticized Old Man bitterly. He accused the latter of illegally trapping on both
572 sides of the Liard River, affirming that the other man had no right to cross the stream. Then
157 he alluded to Old Man's long association with white men and implied that Old Man was
beginning to think of himself as a white man. He ended up by branding his friend as "full of bullshit," that is, a liar. A few days later Old Kean aired his resentment of River Joe, whom he accused of trying to be the boss of the whole country. He fancifully threatened to put River Joe in jail.

Similar attitudes prevailed in the relationship of Old Man and River Joe. Together the two always appeared to be good friends, but behind the other's back Old Man was tirelessly

Ever since I was about three years old my grandmother raised me. My dad quit mama 159
and then mama quit me. She didn't like me, so it was up to grandmother to keep me. At the 608
place where I saw that cutbank with the trading post on top, I also for the first time saw
people hauling moose up the river. The storeman on the other side yelled to our people:
"Moose swimming down the river." I think that's what he said but I was too young to
understand. Old Charlie MacDonald and his people got in a big boat and followed the moose
down the stream. I heard Charlie's father holler to the moose: "Take my bullet, that's the
best bullet." In about three or four hours they brought back the meat.

My grandmother and her sister both followed one husband. My grandmother followed 157
him around all the time. Sometimes, when she left me in camp to go out with a bunch of
people, I became lonely. Once she did that and I began to cry and started out after her.
Edward Cross' father, Kitsala, frightened me. He had an old muzzle loader that he filled with
powder. He fired the powder at my feet. I ran home. When my grandmother came back I
told her that I was going to stay with my aunt, Mildred. She told me: "Go ahead." But
Mildred didn't want me. She said: "You cry too much." So I had to go back to my grandmother.

Soon my mother took me back with her again. We crossed the river to cut wood and one [224]
of our boys caught a squirrel with a sinew snare. I wanted to steal that squirrel. I wanted it
for a pet to drag around and play with. We moved to some other part of the country, I
don't remember where. The next thing I remember we were staying at Lower Post. My
grandmother used to come here to live every summer. That time a great flu epidemic was
raging. This was during the first World War. When the flu passed, a new kind of sickness
hit us. People used to jump out of their homes and sit in the snow. Nobody knew why he
did that. It was during this time that Madeline died. Then when spring came, in May or
June, Old Coyote's grandchild died. The boy had already killed his first moose. He used to
show me how to hunt. One day he shot a duck way out on the lake. The bird drifted down
and he sent me to get it. I cried because I was afraid, but he made me go. I got the duck for
him and he gave me a bite of chewing tobacco for my work. That was the first time I tasted
tobacco.

This was when they tortured my uncle. They called him a witch. I saw my poor uncle [683
tied up but I didn't know why they did that. Once I tried to untie him, but the people nearly 759]
killed me for doing it. Then my grandfather, Old Long, came to Lower Post. We camped
downriver from the store, near where the Highway runs now. The Hudson's Bay boat came
in while we were at the post, and Albert Dease found out about my uncle being tied up in
the woods. Albert went in there and untied him and took the boy outside. That time mama
went to Telegraph Creek and Mildred went with her. Mildred came back again in August
on the boat. I stayed in Lower Post with my grandmother and Mrs. Dickson. When my
aunt came back we all went down the river again. I don't know where we stopped traveling,
maybe at Coal River.[3] We caught up with Old Netocha and the Stone family and stayed
with them to about Christmas. After that my grandfather sent word for us to come to his
place. Old Stone didn't like us to go but grandma started out. Once we got lost because we
followed the wrong trail, a trail that people had used to hunt and fetch meat. The next day

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[3] See Figure 1.

859 we turned back and took the right trail. When night came we camped. The next day we reached Old Long's camp around noon. Old Long had gone to Lower Post and his wife gave us meat to eat. Grandma didn't feel like eating. She told her sister: "If I eat that meat I'm going to die." Mrs. Long asked her why. She said: "I know the flying squirrel ate that meat." Mrs. Long said: "No, you're lying." Finally grandma ate the meat. The next day grandma became sick and Uncle Tom took me over to his camp. He kept me for about three days. Meantime my grandmother died. When he took me home I saw grandma way back in the brush on a tree. I wondered when she was going to get up again and fix the bed for me. *Aunt* Mildred was crying but I didn't know why. Finally my aunt fixed the bed and we went to sleep. Two days later Old Long came home. When he heard what had happened he became angry with his wife. "Tell me why you played that dirty trick on her!" he demanded. Then the old man went to cut lumber to build a coffin for the old lady. I don't know where they buried her, but they took her down the river a way. When they came back home we all pulled out. From that time on *Aunt* Mildred kept me. She kept me well.

[224] I remember one time when my aunt and I were setting marten deadfalls. I asked her why she was setting up all those funny looking sticks and logs. I didn't know about traps. My aunt told me: "I'm going to catch marten and buy some candy and clothes for you." It made me happy when she said that. After about a week we went out to look at the traps. There were no marten; the animals had taken the bait from the rear end of the traps. *Aunt* Mildred never set those traps again. We just traveled, going anyplace. That was a hard winter. Sometimes we had nothing to eat. It was hard to get meat. Once we camped with Pat who had killed a small beaver. It was the first time I tasted that kind of meat. At the next camp we made, I saw people chop the ice in order to set a beaver trap. I wondered what they were chopping the ice for. I didn't know what the trap was for either and wondered what they were going to do with that thing. While waiting for them to set the trap I got cold feet and so went home. When the people came back to look at the trap they didn't find any beaver.

We went down to the hot spring, where Old Tom Smith and Fred Allen were living. Tom Long and Peter Long started down to visit those white men with my aunt's dog. Old Tom Smith had put poison on the trail and our dog ate it. Now we had no dog. Maddalene's brother had her two dogs, so they hauled our clothes, blankets, and grub. When spring came we went to Tobally Lakes. It was my first trip to that place. The people shot many muskrats there. The women cut the feet off and made little bags out of the skin. Leaving Tobally Lakes we went toward Lower Post and came to Lake *Annette*. Maddalene's brother came to

[762] that place. When the people found him he was crazy. His old grandmother hollered at him and he began to cry. When he cried he took a piece of flint and gashed himself on the leg all the way up. He cut his fingers too. He did those things because he wanted to die. Leaving that lake we came to Dead River. After we crossed, we went twenty miles or so up the

[177] river where we met some Mackenzie Indians—[illegible]. They lived on fish and moose up there. Uncle Tom took me with him to show me how to fish. One [illegible] gave me a big bunch of suckers. First I thought he wanted me to take them home for him, so when we got close to camp I gave them back. He told me: "You eat them." When I came home *Aunt* Mildred told me: "You stole those fish." I told her: "No, somebody gave them to me."

one for the men. I could only eat dry meat and I had to pick the needles of spruce brush one by one, so that I would become a good sewer. If I ate fresh meat my uncle or my daddy would have to chew it for me. And I wasn't allowed to laugh. When my sister Dolly got month sick she would let the boys sneak into her tent while grandma slept. That's why Dolly has many children. Aunt Frances never told grandma when she first started to get month sick. [illegible]

One spring we were on our way to Dease Lake for grub. All of a sudden the dogs started to bark and we saw a bear in a tree. Uncle Alfred and I climbed up a tree and started to shoot everyplace. My sister climbed up a tree too; we had frightened them with our hollering and shooting. We thought we had shot the bear, but everybody was afraid to go look for him, because we weren't sure he was dead. We made a long detour trying to find daddy's camp but couldn't reach it. So we had to make our own camp. Nobody slept all night. The next day we went on to Dease Lake. Coming back, Uncle Alfred and I traveled alone. We were afraid that my little sister, Mary, would cry and bring on the grizzly bear, so we left her. When we reached the beaver dam, the dogs started to bark. We thought sure there was a grizzly coming and hid under a willow bush, but the dogs came back and we went on. 159

Another time Uncle Peter, my brother, Dell, and I went to a mountain and saw a moose through a glass. Dell shot and wounded him. Then Uncle Peter and Dell climbed up a fallen tree and sent me to the moose. I asked them to give me a gun, but they wouldn't. When I got to the moose, it jumped up. My brother hollered and I ran back quickly. After climbing into the tree with them, they shot again. That moose had big horns. After he fell down, they told me to go back and make sure he was dead. I went and hit him with a stick. Then I told them that he was dead. Peter must have been about ten years old then, Dell was about fifteen and I was seventeen.

Once daddy killed a moose and built a scarecrow by [illegible] to keep the grizzly bear away. When we came back the next day we found that a grizzly had [illegible] the cache. We took all the fat and almost all the meat, because we were afraid the grizzly would come back. We had to make another trip for more meat. When we came close to the cache, Peter and Dell shot the grizzly. Gee, he was big! Dell was excited and could hardly shoot. We all went away, but daddy warned us that he might still be alive. I wasn't afraid. I ran right over to the bear and daddy hollered. I skinned the grizzly too.

Sometimes kids tried to scare us girls. Once Dell and Jimmy Bean told us a grizzly bear was coming. My little sister and I hid, but the boys were only fooling. The same time my little sister, Anne, Dell, Jimmy, and I were hunting porcupine. We sat down and the boys went up the mountain. They knocked down a rock and Anne and I hid under a thick balsam. We thought a grizzly bear was coming down to us.

There were many gophers in those mountains. Daddy and mama set snares for them, getting thirty or forty each day. When a grizzly bear digs gopher out of the ground, he stands up every once in the while to listen. He does that when he digs up groundhog too. This mountain where we hunted is on the other side of [illegible] River; we call it [illegible] Sheep Mountain. [illegible]

I spent two winters in Telegraph Creek. Then I married Leo Johnson. When I married

J. Teit E-5 (1912-1915) 1917
ND12 Nahane ND12

101 Both tribes live
[224] chiefly by hunting and trapping, but the Kaska depend more on the chase than do the Tahltan. Large game-animals are abundant, consisting
136 of moose, caribou, sheep, goat, and bear. Marmots are plentiful in certain parts, and buffalo are said to have been fairly numerous at one time in the more eastern sections of the country.

101 The Kaska are entirely surrounded by Athapascan tribes, while the Tahltan are neighbors of tribes of two other stocks; viz., the Tlingit to the northwest and west, and the Niska and Kitksan tribes of the Tsimshian stock to the southwest. To the south the Sikani, Carrier, and Chilcotin tribes of the Athapascan stock separate the Tahltan and Kaska from the Shuswap and Lillooet, the nearest tribes of the
439 interior Salish. Owing largely to their position, the Tahltan had a great deal of intercourse with the Tlingit, much more than with any
467 other people. Intercourse and trading were chiefly by way of Stikine River. Trade was in the hands of the Tlingit of Wrangell and vicinity, who annually transported goods by canoe up the river to the head of canoe navigation, a little above Telegraph Creek and close to the headquarters of the Tahltan. The people of the latter tribe acted as middlemen in passing coast products inland, and inland products coastward. The main trade-route between the far east (the Mackenzie valley and the plains) and the Pacific coast in this part of British Columbia lay through the Tahltan and Kaska territory, and there is evidence of a number of cultural features having penetrated a long distance in both directions along that route. Here, as in other parts of the west, the main trade-routes lay as nearly east and west as the physical features of the country allowed; while other routes running north and south within the interior were unimportant, notwithstanding the fact that the nature of the country generally was favorable for travel and intercourse.

447 It may be expected that dissemination of tales has occurred chiefly
177 along the main trade-routes, where intercourse between the tribes was
171 most frequent and closest. Hence throughout the interior, dissemination
773 of tales has followed east and west lines rather than north and south. As the same conditions as to routes prevailed in the southern interior as in the northern, it seems probable that a number of the incidents in tales of the Tahltan and Kaska which correspond with those in tales of the interior Salish have not passed directly from Athapascan to Salish tribes, or vice versa, but have reached both from the more eastern and western sources,—chiefly, it seems, the latter.
177 The Tahltan assert that in the old trading-rendezvous on the upper
171 Stikine, members of the two tribes associated there for weeks together,
773 and that one of the features of meeting was story-telling. Tahltan raconteurs told their stories one day, and Tlingit told theirs the following day. Sometimes they thus told stories turn about for

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

159 [illegible]

[illegible]

[p. 159]

7f7
22¢

[illegible] of the future. [illegible] hunting and trapping [illegible] While we were [illegible] by the illness [illegible] Finally, one afternoon in [illegible] how many lynx [illegible] for a Northern Algonquian people.

[illegible]

7f7

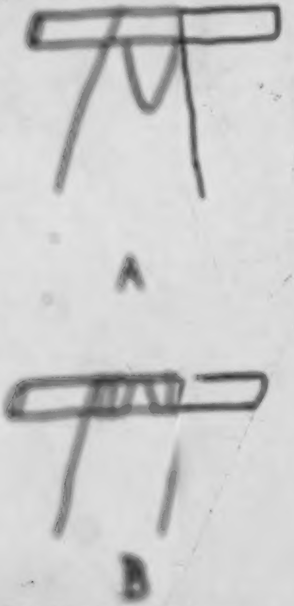

Fig. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

231 Salish. Any kind of stout line of leather or rawhide was used. To give greater strength some of these were plaited. No bone toggles were used on the lines, which were simply tied. Dogs were fed on meat and fish and ate all kinds of scraps and refuse around the camp. When their owners had an abundance of food they got plenty to eat and when food was scarce they necessarily received very little. The Tahltan aver that their old breed of dogs could not live at the coast. Many times Tlingit trading parties took dogs home with them, but in all cases these dogs lived but a short time or became very unhealthy. They developed pulmonary troubles and soon died or became mangy. Whites who have taken away to different parts of the coast specimens of the small Tahltan "bear dog" say that in all cases these dogs soon became sick and died.

● [224] 492 The Tahltan claim that formerly dogs were used by them for hunting only, and it is only about fifty years ago since they first commenced to pack and haul with dogs.

[177] In fact it seems packing and driving came in about the time of the Cassiar gold rush in 1874, and for this reason, the introduction of these processes is generally credited to the Whites. Some Indians aver that a little packing had been done a few years previous to this time. However this may be, packing [243] and driving generally came in about this date. Wooden sleds and dog harnesses of the common kinds used by Whites in the North are those in use, and the methods of driving appear to differ in no ways from those generally prevailing in the North.

492 445 In packing dogs' pack-bags are used. Some of those formerly in use were made of leather, but at the present day all are made of different kinds of canvas or tent material. In shape they are like saddle-bags used on horses. Most of them are of a single strip of canvas of the proper length and width, the middle part of which is intended to rest on the dog's back. The ends are doubled up outwards and sewed to the body so as to form a bag on each side of the dog, a sufficient loose end being left on each side to stretch over and cover the mouth of the bags. Sometimes one loose end is longer than the other, the one simply covering the mouth of the bag of which it is an extension whilst the other reaches over the back of the dog and covers b[illegible]. Sometimes both are of equal length, one loose end being tucked

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

blueberry. Other vegetable products taken from the land included fern roots in spring; 222
lily bulbs; mushrooms, frequently stolen from a squirrel's cache; muskeg apples, that 824
grew up in the mountains and were described as tasting somewhat like turnips; wild 262
onions, of which only the greens were eaten; rose petals, made into a beverage by boiling; and wild rhubarb. Both sexes chewed gum taken from a "half dead" spruce tree, a choice advised by the fact that such gum would not stick to the teeth. Jackpine and spruce fibers were also eaten but sand, birch fiber, willow buds, wild rice, and wild peas held no place in the diet. Birch sap, obtained by tapping the birch in spring, ranked as [314]
a minor delicacy but people ignored poplar sap. Children kept the camp supplied with water, securing it from the river or in the form of snow. Warmed moose milk was sometimes drunk.

Flesh food could be secured with the least expenditure of energy by setting traps, 224
including snares, deadfalls, nets, and, perhaps, pitfalls. For bear the Indian located a snare made of braided babiche (as many as eight strands of semi-tanned skin line might be used) near a berry patch, while for moose and caribou he placed similar snares between trees and across the runways which these animals had made in the course of visiting drinking places and salt licks. Fences were sometimes extended from either side of a moose or caribou snare. At other times trappers thrust two forked poles into the ground and across them suspended a toggle pole twelve feet long and three inches in diameter. From the toggle hung a caribou snare while on either side a fence directed [462]
the animal into the trap. Men always set moose and caribou snares. "Even if a woman knew how to make a caribou snare she could not make it good enough." For lynx a semicircle of poles with a center opening for the snare was anchored in the ground. A single strand of babiche had sufficient strength to hold this animal. Such snares might be erected by women. In mountain gulches through which ran sheep trails men erected free toggle snares for sheep. Often the poles used in this work had to be packed long distances above timberline. Up to six strands of babiche were twisted together to make a snare line strong enough for that animal. For beaver, men (and also women) set snares of three-strand twisted babiche near a dam.

Ground hog snares featured a rock toggle and required two-strand twisted babiche. 224
The family provided itself with a number of six- or seven-foot long forked poles in the 401
fall and packed these above the timberline. The trapper firmly planted one such pole for each snare in a rock cairn near a ground hog den. On either side of the pole ran a small fence about a foot high. After forming the snare loop between these fences, the snare line was bent and knotted around a small trigger stick before continuing through the fork of the pole. Halfway below the fork the line was weighted with a 20-pound rock. The trigger stick was fixed under a convenient knob or protuberance on the upright pole, the toggle's weight serving to keep it fixed until an animal entered the snare and dislodged the stick, whereupon the rock fell to the ground. The weight of the falling toggle lifted the animal off the earth. In timbered areas lifting-pole snares like those frequently used for rabbits were also set for ground hog. In fact, the rock toggle appears to represent an adaptation of the lifting-pole principle to treeless country. Men, boys, and women built ground hog snares.

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Upper Liard

●224 Rabbit traps were of both the lifting-pole and spring-pole types. They were mainly constructed by boys and women. With each spring-pole snare went a notched trigger stick about three-eighths of an inch in diameter and three inches long (Fig. 3, a). The person going to set snares provided himself with a supply of these before leaving camp. At a rabbit run the trapper cut a foundation pole (Fig. 3, b), which he suspended loosely in brush or snow about ten inches above the ground. Above this he bent down the willow spring-pole toggle (c) and to it fastened the doubled end of the snare line with a cow hitch. The other end was bent around the trigger stick, thereby securing it to the foundation pole below which the noose was spread, supported by twigs. Entering the snare a rabbit would dislodge the trigger stick, thus releasing it from the foundation pole and freeing the spring pole, which flew upward, drawing the rabbit, snare line, and trigger stick along. Five minutes sufficed to set such a snare.[3]

[5-84]

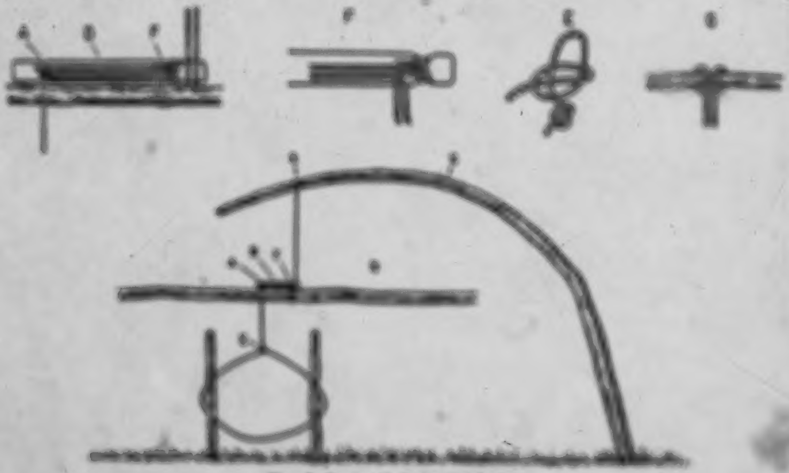

Fig. 3. Spring Pole Rabbit Snare.

The bear, marten, mink, fisher, beaver, and ground hog were also hunted with deadfalls, the construction of which varied somewhat for the different animal species. Bear deadfalls consisted of a double bed log above which a [illegible] trigger stick propped up a fall log measuring a foot or more in diameter. Vertical poles driven into the ground on either side of the trap assured a direct fall for the propped-up end of the fall log. [illegible] driven into the ground. Marten and (after contact) mink deadfalls followed the same pattern but required only a two-inch diameter fall log, which rested directly on the ground. For fisher a somewhat

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[3] Similar snares occurred among the Ingalik and Tanaina. See Osgood, *Ingalik Material Culture* (1940), 239 and Osgood, *Ethnography of the Tanaina* (1937), 38. The apparently greater complexity of the Kaska product may be related to the thin cotton twine with which the models were prepared.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

Upper Liard

heavier pole was employed. In winter, brush placed under the point where a fall log rested on the snow prevented this part from sinking. The pen behind the trigger stick was also provided with spruce boughs. Beaver deadfalls, erected on land behind a beaver house, were of the platform variety, the platform being secured to the samson post with spruce-root line and weighted down with rocks or earth—in winter only rocks. Ground-hog deadfalls also followed the platform pattern, the 14-inch samson post consisting of a bent alder limb or crooked spruce root. Nets of semi-tanned skin line spread under the ice also helped to catch beaver. After the net had been set the trapper broke down the animals' house, causing the inhabitants to flee toward the net. The trapped beaver were dispatched after the net was raised. The suggestion that pitfalls may have been used along the Upper Liard comes only from their mention in folktales.[9] 224 ● [2-86]

For hunting the Indian armed himself with the bow, arrows, spear, gaff hook, sling, or club. Black-birch wood provided the favorite material for bows and, as in toboggan construction, the wood that grew nearest the outside of the tree was thought to be best suited for bending. A small amount of (inner?) bark was often left on the bow wood in order to increase its resiliency. The size of a bow varied; a boy's reached from the ground to just above the stomach, while a man's extended to his forehead. Fitted to such large bows by means of a lashing that passed through two holes drilled in the stock, was a guard about the size of a violin bridge. It prevented the bowstring from snapping back against the fingers. A backing of tanned skin line sometimes appeared on each side of the guard. Occasionally bows were decorated with a "peppermint stick" design applied by winding the stick with widely spaced strips of spruce bark and then drying the wood over a fire. When dry the bark was pulled free, leaving an attractive black and white striped effect. Double-strand, twisted, cold-weather dried babiche supplied the bowstring. The informant objected to employing sinew, claiming that this substance would be too weak. One end of the line was knotted to an end of the bow stock, while an eye on the line end slipped into a notch at the stock's opposite end. 411 422 [5-31] [4-83]

A light wood, such as spruce, ranked highest for arrows. A stick cut to suitable size was heated and then straightened by being worked back and forth in a forked stick split a short distance below the fork. A notch cut on the rear of the shaft fitted against the bowstring. The size of an arrow depended in part on its intended function; for game birds 20 inches was a standard size while 3 feet constituted the size of a shaft suitable for big game hunting. Points also varied according to function. Detachable points of bone barbed on only one side[10] were secured to shafts by means of line. Double bone points, the barbs facing in opposite directions, served to kill spruce hens and grouse. Blunt-tipped shafts fitted with a quarter-inch deep notch brought down rabbits and other small game. Finally, detachable stone points that remained in the animal after the shaft was withdrawn or broken off were reserved for big game. To these bone detach- [illegible] line.

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[9] Pitfalls seem to have been absent among the Fort Nelson Slave. Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* (1946), 47.

[10] Cf., Osgood, *Ingalik Material Culture* (1940), 201, illustration c.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND2
Upper Liard

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321 Bone for tips came from the lower hind leg of the caribou or moose. Eagle feathers, procured from the bird's nest, made the favorite vanes, although arrows for grouse and spruce hens might be tipped with feathers from owls. Crow feathers were avoided, it being said that they made too much noise. After being split, the feathers were glued to the shaft with spruce gum and secured with sinew line. Then each feather was trimmed in a graceful arc. Two- as well as three-feather vanes occurred. In the latter the vanes always lay on three sides of the shaft; never were two vanes located on top. To contain arrows, women manufactured quivers of tanned moosehide, three feet long and six inches in diameter, decorated with tassels and porcupine-quill embroidery. Shoulder straps also carried embroidery. Two compartments in the container separated bird from larger game arrows, both types being inserted into the quiver point first. A birch-bark bottom prevented the sharp points from piercing the hide. A man always wore his quiver under the left arm, shoulder quivers being unknown. When standing on land the hunter held his bow in an absolutely vertical position. In a canoe as well as when kneeling on land, he employed the weapon horizontally. The first and second fingers pulled the arrow. Use of the third finger to grasp the bowstring (i.e., the Mediterranean-type release) was not admitted.

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531

411 Spears, serving as war and hunting weapons, measured from five to ten feet in length and were fitted with iron points or with sharpened, caribou-bone blades. Long spears, used against bear and caribou, carried only iron points. Gaff hooks were of bone. Slings, employed in hunting small game, enjoyed greater use as toys than as serious weapons. From wood and caribou horn were shaped clubs used, for example, against the bear and porcupine.

224 Hunting techniques sometimes required the hunter to wait in ambush for an animal to come within range of his weapon. At other times a man was obliged to drive, track, or pursue game. An example of the first mentioned type of technique is seen in the erection of the "bear sign," constructed when the people "really wanted a bear." A conical structure with an entry big enough to admit a bear was located in the bush and covered evening provided with a fire. The hunter spread animal fat around the shelter and then, armed with a heavy, caribou-horn club, crawled inside to wait. Presently, if the man's plans were realized, a bear came around, attracted by the smell of the grease. As soon as the animal put its head into the structure the man struck. The evening's success need not yet be at an end. After dragging the carcass into the shelter the Indian waited on in the hope of a second bear visiting. Sometimes cubs followed a female into the ambush.

Another kind of decoy is seen in connection with hunting caribou in winter. A hunter sighting caribou on a lake might fashion a decoy by spreading a caribou skin over a willow-pole framework. With this left on the ice, the hunter hid a short distance away. The animals, their curiosity aroused, came to investigate the decoy and so strayed within range of the man's weapon. Game birds were also hunted from ambush. For
223 grouse and spruce hens an Indian selected a willow pole about 12 feet long and cleaned it of bark. At the end he provided a noose of split spruce line. With this implement he crept close to the birds, endeavoring to slip the noose over an animal's head, whereupon

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

Upper Liard

he pulled the noose tight. Boys sought to catch robins and other small birds with snowshoe traps. Snowshoes were placed on their sides so that they met at an acute angle. Bait was placed under the trap, from which a line extended to a cover where the young hunters lay in concealment. As a bird entered the structure a boy pulled the line, bringing the snowshoes down on the helpless prize. 223

For hunting caribou, circular enclosures were built that often reached a diameter of 50 feet. Such surrounds consisted of a circle of upright poles with in-between spaces piled with brush. Various points along the fence held snares, each man who cooperated in the building of the pen also setting a few snares. Cooperative effort drove the animals into the surround, where they could be pursued and dispatched with arrows. A wounded caribou could never be clubbed to death nor might he be touched with wood. To violate these injunctions promised a quick end to a hunter's success and might bring retribution in the form of illness. Men sometimes drove caribou into a ravine or against a cliff, where they could easily be speared to death. Sometimes human beings formed caribou "surrounds." 224● [784]

Semicircular tracking, involving a hunter pursuing an animal against the wind, figured in caribou and moose hunting. For this procedure in dry weather, a man removed his moccasins upon encountering a fresh track. Bare feet enabled him to move more quickly, it was said. In autumn caribou and moose were called with birch bark horns or with a moose scapula rubbed briefly against a tree. During the moose calling season a man exercised caution never to take a moose scapula into camp lest a woman set eyes on the bone. Should this happen, he might lose his hunting ability. Before animal traction became prevalent small dogs assisted hunters in running down moose and bear. [784] [231]

Other hunting techniques included breaking into a beaver house in autumn and killing the occupants with spears. The same animals were also taken with nets or with the gaff stick, an implement further employed to hook a porcupine in its den. In summer porcupine could be clubbed to death easily. [441 286]

Kills of large game ended up by being shared between the hunter's and neighboring families who customarily sent representatives to pack home the meat. At the scene of a kill each man selected that part of the animal appealing to him. Sometimes, especially when meat was scarce, quarreling might occur over the food's distribution. A story is told of one man who sought to tear a caribou head from the clutch of another. The latter fiercely held on to the tongue until that organ was wrenched from the mouth. A "lazy" man, who did not choose to hunt, freely joined a party going to fetch meat from a kill. Failure to share meat aroused resentment and ridicule. As already indicated, men did the greater part of hunting, boys early accompanying fathers into the bush to learn the necessary techniques. A man who lacked sons might train his eldest daughter as hunter, but her success in such work was believed to depend largely on [illegible].

Although the Upper Liard Kaska, like other northern Indians, regarded game as the most attractive food, actually fish provided the dietary mainstay of the population. From the lakes and rivers people took jackfish, lake pickerel, lake and brook trout, whitefish (in smaller numbers because they were also the prey of jackfish), grayling, loche, and sucker. Clubbing, spearing, shooting with bow and arrow, netting, and trap- 226

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

Upper Liard
Dease River

said the custom obtained among the Fort Liard Indians. It would seem as though the "half-cool" food ritual among the Upper Liard Indians constituted a local variation of the hot-food test pattern. Unless meat was scarce, a man entertained without his family always received enough food to bring some home to his wife. Gormandizing was somewhat uncertainly denied, informants stating that a tendency to vomit could be inhibited by spitting on one's knife scabbard. 264

Dease River Kaska. When the environment signaled the arrival of autumn the Dease River people began their movement into the mountains in search of meat to dry and preserve for winter consumption. With the onset of cold weather several families rejoined around some "low place" to fish and here they spent the bulk of the winter. In summer too the people camped in a large body near a good fishing site along a lake or river. Previous to assembling, word traveled between the bands designating the meeting place. 221

The periods of the year are revealed in the following calendar: 805

[illegible] (January)—"pretty near long day moon."
[illegible] (February)—"pretty near middle of the winter moon."
[illegible] (March)—"stick [i.e., timber] moon."
[illegible] (April)—"big eagle flies moon."
[illegible] (May)—"long day moon."
[illegible] (June)—"pretty near change to summer moon."
[illegible] (July)—"middle moon."
[illegible] (August)—"year pretty near gone moon."
[illegible] (September)—"pretty soon snow coming moon."
[illegible] (October)—"snow comes moon."
[illegible] (November)—"pretty near change winter moon."
[illegible] (December)—"pretty near short day moon."

The calendar reveals the interest with which the Indians looked forward to the long daylight of spring and early summer; how autumn warned of winter, snow, and the aging year; and how the shortest day of the year provided a landmark for reckoning time.

Food had to be secured in all seasons. In summer and fall women and girls sought blueberries, low bush cranberries, strawberries, raspberries, salmon berries, soap berries, and currants. With the aid of a digging stick women as well as men dug for wild carrots. People also collected onion greens, rose petals, spruce and birch fibers, willow buds, and spruce gum, but not wild rice or mushrooms. Goose eggs were welcomed in their season. Water, birch sap, and rose petals steeped in water furnished the main beverages. 222 824

In summer and winter traps caught wild animals for food. Bear, caribou, moose, and sheep were snared with four- or five-strand braided babiche line. In the case of caribou [illegible] consisting of poles lashed to trees and piled with brush. Deadfalls took bear, marten, beaver and smaller animals. Pitfalls found no place in the technology. Sometimes the Indians drove caribou and mountain sheep into surrounds where they could be shot or where they might trap themselves in snares. Sheep surrounds were built on relatively low 224

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Peace River

● 224 ground and near that animal's trails. Upon completing the structure the hunters ascended the mountain and drove the sheep toward the corral. Human surrounds aided in moose hunting, a circle of men seeking to drive the animal toward a place where [386] snares had been constructed. Great nets, 15 to 20 feet long and constructed of babiche, were planted to catch beaver, a task for summer nights when the beaver swam freely and one that invited family cooperation. Once caught in a net, the animal was clubbed to death. In winter beaver nets were sometimes suspended under the ice. Moose and caribou hunting sometimes involved semicircular tracking and in autumn a hunter called moose with a birch-bark horn or by rubbing a moose scapula against a tree. Because "moose are smart animals and run away at the smallest sound," tracking them in summer demanded that a hunter remove his moccasins. People did not hunt caribou in bare feet. Often in late winter men depended on deep and crusted snow to help them secure game. The snow impeded the travel of moose and caribou so that the lighter hunter who was also equipped with snowshoes could readily run them down.

411 224 A man's hunting equipment included the bow, arrows, spear, gaff stick, and club. Birch yielded the commonest bow wood but willow also found employment for boys. The middle of the bowstock was backed with caribou sinew, the object being to insure straight shooting. Twisted sinew or babiche furnished a bowstring. Willow and birch wood furnished material for arrows, while obsidian, flint, bone, and horn provided points. Barbed points appear to have been restricted to the latter two materials. Untipped arrows, the wood of which was sometimes sharpened, were suited for bringing down game birds. Vanes of two or three feathers made use of owl or "any other" kind of feather. Men kept their arrows in tanned skin quivers that were carried under the left shoulder and toward the front of the body. This left the weapons in easy access of the hunter's right hand. Spears, sometimes no more complex than a painted or unpainted sharpened pole, served to kill bear and beaver. Lance points of bone and caribou horn were also employed. No clear picture could be obtained of the dart thrower or "stick gun," which was frequently mentioned as having been used in the aboriginal community. The weapon apparently consisted of a piece of birchwood fitted with a hole in which was inserted a two-foot dart provided with a stone point. After aiming the dart the hunter smartly rapped the base of the dart with a stick, thereby sending the missile toward its target. Mention of this weapon also occurred in a folktale collected from an Upper Liard informant who, however, denied that the weapon had been used in his territory.[10] Gaff hooks were inserted into a beaver lodge to seize one of those animals and draw him out to where he could be clubbed to death.

224 Part of every successful hunter's reward came when he proudly returned to camp packing a few token pieces of meat. On the following morning other men went to the scene of the kill and selected whatever portions of the animal they pleased.

[362] 226 In terms of preference fish occupied an inferior dietary position compared to meat. Economically they appear to have been of far greater importance. Trout, whitefish, sucker, and jackfish were speared, netted, trapped, and angled. From the rib bones of

[10] For the tale see Honigmann, *Cultural Dynamics of Sex* (1947), 40; or, Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 283.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

Dease River
Tsalona

251/417 to the other, crowned such a structure. Families also utilized simpler platform caches, the food on these being covered with brush or bark held in place with heavy logs.

264 Women cooked on occasions when the family ate as a unit. Food was served on bark dishes or in wooden bowls. Spoons of sheep or caribou horn facilitated eating. People took meals twice a day, morning and night, both sexes as well as children eating together. An informant denied gormandizing, remarking that the people knew very well when to cease eating.

221 222 262 *Tsalona.* The fat game in the high country attracted the families in autumn. With the onset of winter the bands descended to a fish lake, from which the men went out to fetch meat from caches, hauling back the food on skin toboggans. Often only two families spent the winter together at a fishing site—two brothers and their wives and children or about ten people in all. Summer sent the hunters to set snares for moose and goats. All summer the men "kept on the move," following game. The usual vegetable foods were gathered by women, including blueberries, low bush cranberries, strawberries, [388] raspberries, currants, and soap berries. The latter berries were never mixed with grease because the berries would "smell" the grease and "settle down again, not make soap." In other words, they would not froth as they did when mashed with water.[19] People ate lily bulbs raw as well as cooked. Bark vessels served to catch birch and poplar sap [261] for drinking. Both sexes chewed spruce gum but geophagy remained unpracticed. Spruce, birch, and jackpine fibers, peeled with a knife, were eaten raw, as was wild rhubarb which, however, people took pains to "skin." Wild onions were cooked with meat. The informant denied any use of willow buds and wild rice for food, the latter being unrecognized in this area. Two varieties of muskeg tea were sought by gatherers, the stems and leaves of both types being boiled. The species could be identified only as tas'hoe and [illegible].

● 224 262 Our informant confidently stated that moose had always populated the country of the Tsalona but denied the presence of elk, wood buffalo, and mountain sheep. Moose were snared and also hunted with the bow, the hunter relying on semicircular tracking to approach within close range of his prey. In season the moose might be called with a dried moose scapula. No custom of removing moccasins while tracking game could be recalled. Sometimes a line of men moving forward in concerted action drove a moose toward a series of snares. Caribou were also caught in snares, and skin decoys further assisted in the hunting of that animal. A hunter who wanted to kill a bear when it was summer, sought to surprise the animal in a berry patch, shooting it first with an arrow and then finishing it off with a lance bearing a caribou-horn point. In winter men obtained bears by shooting them while in a den or by throwing lances into the lair. Sometimes a smoke fire served to drive the animal out of its winter dwelling. Traps also aided in killing beaver in the spring. A porcupine could easily be clubbed to death but [384] in winter had first to be smoked out of its burrow. No taboo forbade the clubbing of any animal. Following the introduction of dogs, people employed them to track game. Other

[19] W. Pike reports the coastal tribes to pound soap berries "till a thick froth, much resembling soap bubbles, gathers. . . . this froth, with a judicious mixture of salmon oil—or, better still, seal oil—they consider one of the things worth living for." Pike, *Through the Subarctic Forest* (1896), 55-56.

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Tselona
Frances Lake

animals eaten included the muskrat, lynx, rabbit, ground hog, marten, and body louse. 224
Ground hog, the informant pointed out, furnished a far more important source of food 262
in the aboriginal period than did the rabbit. Women preserved a large number of ground
hog from the fall for winter consumption. The fox and weasel were trapped for fur alone, [251]
while the skunk remained severely left alone. Birds caught for food included the owl, goose, duck, grouse, ptarmigan, swan, crane, and spruce hen. The eagle, crow, hawk, and loon played no role in the diet. Any successful hunter of large game, after butchering his prize, returned to camp and announced his good fortune, thus stimulating men and women to set out to secure a share of the meat. In general, butchering involved first the removal of an animal's skin, severing the limbs, and removing the viscera. The carcass could then be divided further.

Techniques of fishing included spearing with bone-pointed spears (the bone coming 226
from the ankle of a moose), angling with bone points bearing moose-meat bait, and trapping with a fish weir. In winter weirs could be set in fast creeks that never froze; there were undoubtedly a number of such creeks on the Rocky Mountain slopes in the Tselona country. People did not fish with the aid of torches nor did they employ snares. Fish eaten included the grayling, sucker, ling (loche), whitefish, and trout. Salmon did not extend into this region.

Only when fire could not be provided did the Indians venture to consume raw meat. 252
Hot-stone boiling in bark vessels served as the standard procedure for preparing flesh food. Pit cooking as well as stomach boiling were both denied. Blood went into the preparation of soup as did additional rendered grease. Although occasionally fixed by boiling, foetal animals were generally broiled, always in their entirety without the viscera being removed. A hunter did not neglect the opportunity to drink raw milk when he had slain an animal with full mammary glands.

As elsewhere in the northern forest the group recognized late September and October 251
as a period suitable for meat drying. Now smudge fires could be neglecting without risking the danger of blow flies spoiling the food. For preservation women cut the meat of large game animals into long thin slices but ground hogs, minus the viscera, were dried in their entirety. Berries dried as they lay spread on a flat surface and, like other dehydrated foods, might be freshened again by soaking them in water. Skin bags contained pemmican, made of chopped meat and grease and without berries. The informant denied that viscera had ever been stuffed.

An entire family ate together, taking food from birch bark dishes. (Spruce bark was 264
avoided because it imparted a pitchy taste to the food.) Periods of starvation visited 261
the community not infrequently and sometimes resulted from caches ransacked by 266
grizzly bears or other animal marauders. Only by quickly locating a well-stocked source of fish could famine be avoided. Cannibalism sometimes made an appearance in periods of starvation. The sight of much food presented the tendency to overeat, especially following a period of limited rations. At such a time friends advised a hungry man to resume eating with caution, first offering him moose blood and pointing out that death might ensue if he ate meat straight off.

Frances Lake Kaska. No data on the food quest were sought from Frances Lake in- 000

Dease River
Tselona

784 *Dease River Kaska*. Many of the animal avoidances common among the Upper Liard people were shared by the Dease River Indians. Danger came from the mink and otter, while the killing of a toad always produced illness. People fed moose, caribou, and beaver flesh to dogs, and informants did not admit to having been careful in disposing of moose hairs. Women ate any part of an animal that a man used for food. Dream animals, from whom power had been obtained, were avoided for food but whether completely or only in part we did not learn. Illness followed violation of such taboos. Young men and women drank lightly of water, apparently in order to maintain their strength.[39] No [834] restrictions on youths' drinking grease were admitted. A man avoided coitus with his wife for one night before going to hunt.

224 755 Shamans made hunting magic by singing magical animal songs accompanied by other men. Singing also operated in curing ceremonies. Any person with some power, even a youth, might perform healing magic. Should the disease not be relieved, increasingly more powerful (reputed?) shamans would be solicited. Successful cures enhanced a practitioner's reputation. In addition to confession, techniques of doctoring included blowing into the person to restore the latter's soul when it was believed to have been stolen through sorcery. A shaman also sucked intrusive disease from the body, revealing stones or very little animals that had caused the ailment. Sometimes a practitioner blew his breath into a vessel containing water for the sick man to drink.

754 Sorcery involved the capture of another person's wind. This produced illness. Any man with sufficient power could succeed with malevolent magic, or else the services of a stronger shaman guaranteed successful completion of the deed. Only evilly disposed men accepted such employment, indicating that in-group sorcery met with disapproval. The man who produced illness could also cure it and sometimes offered to do so in exchange for a payment of skins. Suspected black magicians inspired fear and respect. No physical sanctions appear to have been directed against their activities.

787 Scapulimancy was practiced. The bull-roarer possessed magical power and a man swung it for magical assistance, to chip stone successfully and also to bring about milder weather.

784 825 *Tselona*. Certain animals aroused great fear and were never trapped. These included the flying squirrel, toad, mink, and otter.[40] To kill one of these creatures promised that one's children would sicken and die. The wolf and wolverine were also avoided for fur

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[39] Before marriage a Tlingit boy's uncle told him: "Do not drink too much water or it will make you lazy." Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 428. See also above, p. 107.

[40] For the Bear Lake Sekani attitudes of respect have been reported regarding the wolf, toad, salamander, and otter. "The Indians around us had many superstitions regarding wolves; a rifle that killed a wolf would soon kill a human; or a person born at a certain time must never kill a wolf, because if he did, his nearest female relative was certain to become insane." Children were startled when shown toads. "It was quite taboo for them to touch or get near 'frogs.' Such an action meant death or illness and all sorts of horrible things." To touch salamanders "might mean that a man would lose all his worldly possessions." Otter skulls were preserved by the youngsters and would not be surrendered to the naturalists lest the "mother would be possessed by the spirits of the three departed otters and eventually become insane." Stanwell-Fletcher, *Naturalists in the Wilds of British Columbia* (1940), 131, 137, 221.

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Frances Lake

and food but they do not seem to have possessed the same dangerous potency as the mink, for example. The informant denied any general avoidance of the otter. Rather some people paid more regard to him than others. Clarification of this statement could not be secured. Perhaps a man who enjoyed otter power felt less fear for that animal. Following their introduction in numbers, dogs came to eat the meat of any animal but not the leg tendons or intestines of the moose. Avoidance of these foods preserved the dog's endurance. 784 825

A young man observed a number of food avoidances designed to develop capacities for hunting. He drank water lightly, since many animals disliked water. Avoidance of the beverage magically helped a man to obtain greater power over game. He also ate sparingly of leg tendons, moose intestines, and moose brains lest his quickness and resistance to fatigue become impaired. The successful tracking of large game depended on speed. No grease taboos were known. Except during menstruation when a woman avoided fresh meat, women ate the same foods eaten by men. Avoidances designed to develop hunting power did not apply to women. As the informant explained, "Game don't want him, that woman." Dream animals played no part in the diet, not being eaten in whole or part. Some shamans never ate porcupine or beaver and others rejected the head of moose. These observances would seem to be auxiliary to the taboo on the meat of the animal sponsor or may represent a partial contradiction of that statement. Cohabitation taboos prior to hunting were denied. 224 ● [262] [834]

Frances Lake Kaska. Attitudes toward the otter are described by Pike.[43] 784 825

> A curious superstition prevails that if you kill an otter it is capable of causing much trouble by coming to life again in your stomach. Only three winters ago a Frances Lake woman lay at death's door with this malady, but she was saved by the timely arrival of the only medicine man left in the tribe. He seems to have diagnosed the case correctly at once, and holding a sheep's horn spoon to the patient's mouth, he proceeded to repeat a long incantation suitable to the occasion. As soon as he had finished, to the great joy of all the relatives who had gathered to see the death, three little otters dropped out into the spoon. The old lady recovered rapidly, and afterwards confessed to having stolen and eaten an otter that she had found in somebody else's beaver trap during a long period of starvation in the early summer.

Hunting rites included depositing an unidentified "medicine" on a moose track, either to attract the animal back to that spot or to make him more vulnerable to the hunter's arrow. After spreading other substances around a beaver house the hunter would sit down to await the appearance of the game. Scapulimancy could not be recalled. The wearing of animal figurines cut from bone insured success in hunting. 224 [787 778]

Sucking provided the commonest means of curing but other conceptions of illness coexisted with the notion of intrusion that sucking suggests. A young man carefully 755

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[43] Pike, *Through the Subarctic Forest* (1896), 145. Field reports that "The Pellys and Little Salmons believe that very near all sickness comes from the otter and mink and if anybody kills one, they or some of their near relatives will get sick and die. If any should happen to kill an otter or mink and skin it, he generally will use some old knife and throw the knife away when he is finished. He believes by doing this he guards against getting sick as the sickness is in the knife. Also if you touch or kill a frog your limbs will lose their strength, and you will get poor. Your flesh will gradually waste away till you die." Field, *Unpublished manuscript* (1913), 6.